

Rise and Resist General Meeting - Zoom Edition - 3.23.2021

Rise and Resist Contact Information

- Website: www.riseandresist.org
 - Email list signup <http://eepurl.com/cCzq1X>
 - Twitter: www.twitter.com/RiseandResistNY
 - Facebook: www.facebook.com/RiseandResistNYC/
 - Instagram: www.instagram.com/risenresistnyc/
 - General email: info@riseandresist.org
 - Press email: media@riseandresist.org
 - Meetings: Every Tuesday at 7pm on Zoom. To sign up for the Zoom meeting [click here](#)
-

Facilitators: Alexandra and Vivian **Notes:** Maryellen

Good News

- HALT Solitary Bill passes both houses of New York State Legislature,
- COVID vaccine eligibility expanded for age 50+ in NY.
- (Mark Hannay) More good news: Before the House recessed last week for its Easter-Passover break, one of the bills it passed was the PRO Act (Protect the Right to Organize) to make it easier for workers to organize a union at their worksite. ...and red ties (at work) on Fridays (for men)

Report Backs

*3/17 NYCAN action in honor of Bayard Rustin to pressure Cory Johnson
- (Ray Black) Joyful gathering. Eight RAR people joined the NYCAN people. Walter Nagel is the partner of Bayard Rustin (who passed away in 1987). Cory Johnson was invited to the action, but did not attend. There was a march to his office to further lobby him to do the right thing on this legislation. People spoke about the legacy of Bayard Rustin and what peace meant to them. Green carnations distributed (which was conceived by Oscar Wilde). This is a queer identity symbol and was fitting for bringing that out during this action. Stu spoke about peace activism and what Bayard Rustin meant to Stu.

Question (by Cherie): Has Corey replied to outreach at all?

Answer (by Ray) Corey has stated that he would not put this legislation up for a vote because matters that are international should not be decided by local representatives. The councilmembers will not stand up to Corey because they want to “play nice.”

*3/19 Say Their Names - Fridays at 96th-Broadway at 5PM - ongoing

- (Jenny Heinz) Good weather last Friday and there were many different [competing] events that took place at the same day/time. The action is important regardless of the “crooked banners.” There are always people who stop by and participate. Next one will be this Friday (March 26th) at 5pm.

- (Alexandra) There were many actions that day, and few people attended the STN action from RAR. But the action is attracting a lot of community support.

*3/19 Protect Queer and Trans Asylum Seekers rally and march

- (Jamie) Sponsored by QDEP. They obtained RAR endorsement and marshals. Bike marshals helped with traffic and approx. 10 RAR marshals did the foot marshaling. Police were nowhere to be seen – which was great. Group was approx. 100 people and the march went from Foley Square to 6th Avenue. Took the streets. Great chants/powerful. A lot of people in the crowd were Trans and Queer asylum seekers. Solidarity and marching and chanting felt very community oriented. Not many hecklers. Successful event. It was a really nice, spirited event to be at.

- (Mike Delia) A wonderful demonstration, and was impressed with RAR marshaling. Regarding the police not participating [question], have there been other similar experiences?

Answer (by Jamie) Completely different the way police, police violence demonstration that target them. Police are laid back when demonstrations don't have anything to do with them. For this demonstration they stayed out of the way – which was the best experience.

*3/20 Chuck the Filibuster cancelled by organizers

- (Livvie Mann) Sunrise was the lead group for this action. The organizers felt that since there were so many actions on 3/20, they didn't want to take away from those. Next action will be Thursday, 3/25th at 7:30 pm, in Brooklyn (Grand Army Plaza). This conflicts with RAR Environment meeting.

*3/22 White Supremacy Banner drop on West Side Highway @ The Intrepid

- (Ray) Wanted to bring a message to people who weren't supportive of the anti-white supremacy message. Action occurred from 4 – 5:30pm. Erik McGregor took photographs. Banner wasn't big enough. The "Convict Trump" banner (30' long) was much bigger and more effective. Need to design/create a banner with letters that are spread out so they aren't blocked by the fence posts. Also, because of the pandemic there is no more rush hour traffic - approx. two cars "honked." Also need to have the demo during a cloudy day (because the sun will shine and reflect the banner making it hard to read).

- (Jamie) Picture of the banner in front of the Intrepid looked great. [Question] Would a banner like that one look better on a sidewalk such as Park Avenue, on the medium. There would be a lot of wealthy people walking by, and taking Uber, taxis, etc.

Answer (by Alexandra) Save further discussion for actions meeting (tomorrow/Wednesday, 3/24th).

*Report backs on 3/20 Peace Vigil For Victims of Asian Hate and 3/22 Stop Asian Hate Rally

- [Tabled to discuss during the speaker's presentation by Jo Ann Yoo]

Guest Speaker Jo Ann Yoo from Asian American Federation

- (Jo Ann Yoo) Spoke with the Executive Director of the organization in Atlanta. For NY the violence has been happening for more than one year. These incidents are a result of what happens if no action is taken (e.g., need to get systems in place, educate people about how they can protect themselves, learn how to report instances).

AAF has been leading the charge about mental health programs (this has been a "war" waged with the City). In January 2020 there were "just" incidents of people spitting and pushing Asian Americans. But the recent deaths in San Francisco (especially violence against the elderly Asian Americans), and the tragedy in Georgia are horrific. Victims' family members are very

upset because the public is jumping to conclusions and putting labels on the victims that they were sex workers. There are a lot of misperceptions.

Everybody is asking the Asian American leaders: what should be done. Jo Ann has been reminding people that there has been less than a week since the Georgia shooting, and people still have to grieve for the Asian American community. This is painful. The Asian American community is usually “invisible.” Becoming visible by the tragedies isn’t how the Asian American community wanted to become “visible.”

The Asian American population is scared and people are looking to Jo Ann for a magic answer. There are many conversations that have to take place. It’s unfair for the media to keep asking Jo Ann about what should be done. Instead, the “rich white men in Congress” should acknowledge what has happened - especially Mitch McConnell in general as a leader, but also because he has an Asia American wife. Why haven’t he or she said anything? It doesn’t matter who has power or money.

Young Asian Americans were very active during last summer by calling out Black discrimination among their families/parents. But there haven’t been discussions about the Asian American community’s history with trauma, etc. A lot of young people want to be in the streets – they’re angry. But Jo Ann is advising/reminding them to be careful. If anything happens to the volunteers, one concern is who will protect them (e.g., insurance).

Regarding available resources: Jo Ann is getting help from consultants (e.g., fundraising details). One problem is that AAF only has 10 people working there. It isn’t the kind of organization that develops and produces marches/rallies, etc., or make demands. AAF is a “policy shop” that generates reports and policy recommendations. But this time is very difficult – don’t know how to navigate everything.

Beginning to get some clarity and meet with influential people like Susan Rice and Merrick Garland. People are listening to what NYC is doing, and AAF is trying to advocate for what happens here in the community. Jo Ann is working with Jumani Williams to write an Op-ed about anti-hate crimes projects in New York and how they have been defunded. NYC is not a City that prioritizes equity. “We” need to get in there and fight.

AAF’s grand plan is to launch a national goal, in addition at the state and city levels. Going to work on putting something in place that is better than what is happening now, before the next tragedy.

Jo Ann has reached out to Arab community after yesterday’s (Monday, 3/22) tragedy in Boulder, Colorado.

Jo Ann appreciates everything that activists are doing and welcomes ideas. Very grateful for people who are able to elevate the challenges Asian Americans are experiencing. People want AAF to organize another action/vigil but there are limited resources (e.g., AAF staff) and the pandemic is a concern.

Trying to convene space to put together a plan. Working with leaders of different organizations.

- (Alvin) [Shared images from the rally.] There was an amazing time when Noel addressed the crowd with passion, and admitted that he never did that before.

- (Jo Ann) The peace vigil was for the Asian American community. A lot of elected officials arrived and demanded the mic. But the goal was to bring the Asian American community together to grieve. There isn't space for Asian Americans to stand together and appreciate each other. The best part was that there were so many people who haven't seen each other (e.g., advocates and friends) since the lockdown/because of COVID and the pandemic.

Jo Ann doesn't want to host demonstrations, just to host demonstrations. Wants to be thoughtful and center the Asian American community. Most of the journalists of media outlets who were covering the demonstrations were Asian American - and many of them are not doing well (e.g., NYTimes reporter got choked up during an interview). The tragedies touch all of us because the women are "our" community: our grandmas, mothers, daughters, sisters, etc.

- Question (by Livvie) Are people being asked to accompany older Asian people in [NYC] Chinatown?

- Answer (by Jo Ann) Guardian Angels have been in [NYC] Chinatown since last year and have been recruiting more people. If the public wants to support the Asian American community in that way, that's great. But it's hard to pinpoint just [NYC] Chinatown area because the victims reside in various locations throughout NYC (e.g., L train, Flushing). When Jo Ann heard about the last hate-crime story (about the slashing) she realized it happened in part of the district where she lives.

After the slashing, Noel said no one helped him. No one asked if he was ok, or took a picture of the perpetrator. Noel had to walk the entire length of the platform to the token booth, then ask for someone to call 911. The Bedford L stop often has a lot of young kids – but they didn't have the decency to help Noel – someone with blood gushing from a wound, or alert the conductor to ask for help, etc. Maybe, possibly, it's horrific to watch someone get slashed and that is a reason for no one helping. But there should have been people/someone to at least Noel if he needed help. It's very shocking that no one stepped up to help.

- (Katrina) The incidents remind Katrina of actions Occupy and other groups organized in 2011 and 2012, when they traveled in the subways and took over a subway car to hold spontaneous teach-ins. Maybe RAR actions group can organize a spontaneous bystander training action (with Rev. Billy, etc.) to educate people, and make them more aware of what they should do when they see other people getting hurt/attacked.

- (Brad) These incidents are daunting for everyone. We weep for the Asian American community and people in Boulder, Colorado. Question Should "we" address the larger issue about guns? Recognize that all of us have red blood. There could be more people killed in any city. It's daunting for where to pick our challenges.

- Answer (by Jo Ann) When she heard what was happening in Boulder and that the shooter was identified, she reached out to Arab American community because the backlash is going to start. Racism is the issue and that there has yet to be an honest conversation about how it affects the different communities: Muslim, Asian, Queer, Arab, Jewish, etc. Racism is nonstop and the country's reaction is to find fault, to point at communities as a whole.

Issues Jo Ann is facing/trying to solve:

- What is the vocabulary for demanding "things", what should be the demands, and how are they framed?
- How to interact with the police (e.g., half the community doesn't want to interact with the police, and the other half does)?
- How to deal with the hate incidents?

- How to help Asian Americans who are undocumented?
- How can Asian Americans travel to/from work - put food on tables for their families?
- What can be done to support Asian Americans who don't speak English, and are victims of crimes?
- Identify ways to maximize the time with media coverage

Upcoming Actions

*Thursday 3/25 5PM Immigration Vigil at Staten Island Ferry Terminal

- (Jamie) Two purposes for the Immigration vigils:

1. This past week, the Immigration Dream and Promise Act was introduced and provides a path to citizenship for Dreamers - but it only covers 3M of 11M of the people who President Biden wants to provide a pathway for. The Bill was passed in 2019 (in the House) but was never presented to the Senate (because, McConnell). Would be good to pass because the process could be done incrementally. But it's not a strong bill overall.

2. Second Bill is Farm work for Modernization Act, which gives undocumented farm workers a path to obtain a green card. Passed 247 -174 with genuine bipartisan support.

Questionable whether either or both Bills could pass (the concern is that they won't because of the filibuster). The bills are supported by Immigrant justice groups. There is a humanitarian crisis at the border and the Biden administration is not processing people fast enough primarily because it's an overwhelming situation. But the situation is not malicious like the Trump administration was against the Immigration community.

There are still 14k people in I.C.E. detentions and some are being deported as their cases come out.

- (Jackie) Our people are being honest and the structure they inherited was useless. [Question] Should there be an increase of awareness about the conflict between the two administrations?

- Questions (by Mark Hannay) Is there a succinct message that could be provided during the Thursdays RAR vigils that address the different administrations' positions. The optics are getting bad for the Left, so how do "we" get out in front of that and change the narrative?

Answer (Jamie) Most immigration groups in the US are more concerned about people who are in I.C.E. custody than people at the border. Partly because that is their mission.

- (Mike) Biden administration has only been in existence for two months. We should be clear that people seeking asylum are being rejected. Remember: The US bears a lot of responsibility for why people are fleeing the areas in Central America, etc. – who were not treated as refugees.

*Tax The Rich

- (Livvie) NY State budget: Assembly and Senate raised \$7B in revenue. There was a companion rally on Zoom for people who couldn't go to Albany. Now the pressure is on Cuomo because he is trying to avoid taxing the rich. Tomorrow (Wednesday, 3/24) there is a Tweetstorm at noon [information was added to the meeting's chat].

- (Mark) The Fund Excluded Workers campaign is about undocumented essential workers who have not received monetary support because of their immigration status – they have been exempted/excluded by any funding. We need to help them: They're a significant part of our

population, and essential in the essential workforce. One House Bill has some money – but it's not enough.

There are ways for people to support the campaign: hunger strikes, financial donations, assisting with logistics, registering to provide supportive functions, posting information about the campaign in social, etc.

Some RAR people in a workgroup came up with a couple ideas/different options to consider:

1. 7-day relay hunger strike: Kick off on Thursday (3/25) morning. Small groups of people will each take one day during seven days to demonstrate solidarity by fasting in their own homes and share reflections/experiences over social media - general information about hunger strike.

2. 1-day of action: RAR as a group goes to the church on Sunday (3/28) – the significance is that it's Palm Sunday and the first day of Passover. Show up in the afternoon and stand outside the church. No fasting involved.

- (Donna) Want to make a distinction between the two alternatives. How many people want to do the virtual/day-by-day at home? [Facilitators did not poll the group]. How many people want to go to the church on Sunday? [8 people raised their hands.] Fasting has traditionally been a way to identify how significant and important an issue is – it gets publicity.

- (Maryellen) Inwood Indivisible is doing the same relay campaign. Maybe there is an opportunity to collaborate with RAR action.

- (Donna) Don't see any real value for coordinating with Inwood Indivisible.

- (Alexandra) Should collaborate with Inwood Indivisible.

- (Ann Rubine) This campaign has a huge social media presence: people are posting/documenting their hunger strike experiences every day and Tweeting at elected officials. This is a way to protest and demonstrate a show of solidarity - to get as many groups as possible sign onto the fast.

Straw Poll

1. 7-day relay hunger strike: 9 people

2. 1-day of action (at 1pm or 1:30pm – 3:30 pm): 8 people

For questions or more information about the action/s, contact Mark Hannay

(15) New Actions (Three Climate Actions)

*Tokio Marine - DON't INSure Climate Disaster 3/25 noon (1221 6th Avenue)

- (Cherie) Fossil Fuel projects can't be built unless people fund them. If there's no insurance they can't proceed. Tokio Marine is an insurance company (250 headquarters around the world). It's among the top 10 insurers of coal, oil, and gas projects. It has limited policies on coal with many loopholes. It has not ruled out fossil fuel projects. The company is a gold sponsor of the Tokyo Olympics torch rally – which will take place this Thursday (3/25) in NYC. RAR will take the opportunity to call Tokio Marine out. The RAR group will go to the Tokio Marine headquarters with three banners (which are being sent from Sunrise group – not produced by RAR). The Location is across from Fox. RAR action in coalition with other groups (e.g., Sunrise, XR).

- (Mary Hawkins) If the banner doesn't show up, go to the FedEx office at Astor Place and have a printout produced (don't use a black background).

Request to Endorse Vote: Unanimously passed

***Make Polluters Pay 4/7 5PM**

- (Cherie) CCIA just introduced in the State legislature. The primary sponsor is Kevin Parker (Brooklyn) and there are co-sponsors such as anti-IDC people (e.g., Robert Jackson). Bill number is S4264A. The Bill puts NY on a path to climate justice and sets a goal. The CCIA is legislation about how to fund climate justice by making polluters pay. The money will come in through pollution imports into NYS. Very complicated.

Day of Actions will be on Wednesday, 4/7th and take place throughout NY (250 groups/coalitions). Objectives are to try to get majority sponsorship by the end of April. Request to have an RAR action at the Climate Count-down Clock in Union Square. The themes include: "Time is Running Out", and "Time to Act."

Request to Support Action Vote: Unanimously passed

***Earth week - Stop The Money Pipeline 4/17**

- (Stu) May be postponed to next week.

- (Jonathan) XR has asked RAR to endorse and provide marshals. Will make another pitch at next week's meeting. This action will be a bank crawl in the Times Square area (e.g., Bank of America, Wells Fargo, TD, etc.). There will be creative, XR components at each location. The march will end at 49th and Madison with a die-in. There will be many components for people to get involved. Pressure is to stop the money. [More information was added to the meeting's chat.]

Request to Endorse Vote: Unanimously passed

Halt Solitary passes, and other bills in the NYS pipeline

- (Donna) Both Houses passed this and it's on Cuomo's desk. There will be a Virtual Town Hall meeting on Thursday (3/24), at 5:30 – 7pm. This is a way to continue putting pressure on Cuomo because he may not sign it.

Finance

- (Eve) No funding report available. Storage unit has one keycard. There is an option to pay for additional key cards or provide the company with a list of people who can access the storage unit. Email Eve to get your name on the list.

RISE AND RESIST